



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

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**Testimony in Support of HB 495**  
**“Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Funding”**  
**Submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee**  
**February 15, 2023**

**SUPPORT**

The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC) supports HB 495, which would improve access to the Child Care Scholarship Program by fully funding it to serve all eligible families, limiting the conditions in which a program freeze can be implemented, and requiring the same or improved levels of reimbursement rates, copayment levels, and income eligibility requirements as in the immediately previous fiscal year.

MDAEYC is a professional association of 1,900 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We believe that all children deserve high-quality early childhood education, no matter the income level of their parents. The Child Care Scholarship Program enables families with low or moderate incomes to receive a child care scholarship to cover a large part of their child care costs, promoting equitable access to early childhood education.

In recent years, Maryland raised the scholarship rates and expanded eligibility, serving more families with a more substantial child care scholarship amount. These improvements have enabled the State to help more families afford the high cost of child care. Despite these important improvements, families still face challenges in accessing the scholarship program due to insufficient funding.

HB 495 would require the state budget to provide the full funding needed to serve all the families eligible for the scholarship, beginning in Fiscal Year 2025. Fully funding the Child Care Scholarship Program will enable many more Maryland families with low or moderate incomes to be able to afford and access the child care they need to support children’s development and parents’ employment. We urge your support of this legislation.

*If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, Program Coordinator, at [stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org](mailto:stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org) or 240-441-3280.*